

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. Applicants thank the Examiner for total consideration given the present application. Claims 1-11 were pending prior to the Office Action. Claims 12-13 have been added through this reply. Claims 2-11 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter included therein. Therefore, claims 1 and 12-13 are pending. Claim 1 is independent. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejected claims in light of the remarks presented herein, and earnestly seeks a timely allowance of all pending claims.

OFFICIAL ACTION

Claim Rejection – 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 8-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential structural cooperative relationships of elements, such omission amounting to a gap between the necessary structural connections.

Claims 8-9 have been canceled; therefore, the withdraw of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1-4 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Japanese Publication No. 2001-130780, hereinafter the “780” publication. Claims 1-2 and 5-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Japanese Publication No. 6-144618, hereinafter the “618” publication. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

For a Section 102 rejection to be proper, the cited reference must teach or suggest each and every claimed element. *See M.P.E.P. 2131; M.P.E.P. 706.02*. Thus, if the cited reference fails to teach or suggest one or more elements, then the rejection is improper and must be withdrawn.

In this instance, both publications (780, 618) fail to teach or suggest each and every claimed element.

Argument: Features of claim 1 not taught:

For explanation only, and not for purposes of limiting the present claims, Applicants refer to Figure 1 of the present application to show embodiments of the invention that include an example of a sheet transport mechanism.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to features of claims 2, 3, 4, and 7 and additional limitations. More specifically, claim 1 as amended recites, “[a] sheet transport mechanism, comprising: a rotation roller; a plurality of driven rollers which are arranged parallel to an axis of the rotation roller; and a plurality of sheet transport guides, each guiding toward the rotation roller, a sheet to be transported between the rotation roller and the driven rollers, each of the sheet transport guides including a torsion coil spring having an arm portion which is connected to each of the driven rollers, wherein each of the sheet transport guides applies elastic force to each of the driven rollers so that each of the driven rollers is elastically biased toward the rotation roller, and each elastic force applied to each of the sheet transport guides is different from each other with distance from a predetermined reference position.” *Emphasis added.*

Thus, claim 1 is directed to a sheet transport mechanism which has a moveable member (a driven roller R32 shown in Fig. 1 or a separation pad 2 shown in Fig. 3) and a sheet transport guide (a torsion coil spring) which applies elastic force to the movable member and forms a sheet transport path by an arm. Such a configuration prevents a gap in a sheet transport path and occurrence of jam.

Contrary to the claimed invention, the 780 publication, for example, merely discloses that a plurality of torsion coil springs for applying elastic force to driven rollers 5 are arranged parallel to an axis member 11.

Therefore, neither publications (780, 618) show or suggest a sheet transport mechanism, comprising: a rotation roller; a plurality of driven rollers which are arranged parallel to an axis of the rotation roller; and a plurality of sheet transport guides, each guiding toward the rotation roller, a sheet to be transported between the rotation roller and the driven rollers, each of the

sheet transport guides including a torsion coil spring having an arm portion which is connected to each of the driven rollers, wherein each of the sheet transport guides applies elastic force to each of the driven rollers so that each of the driven rollers is elastically biased toward the rotation roller, and each elastic force applied to each of the sheet transport guides is different from each other with distance from a predetermined reference position.

Independent claim 1 is submitted to be allowable over both publications (780, 618) for at least this reason.

Dependent claims 12-13 are allowable for the reasons set forth above with regards to claim 1 at least based on their dependency on claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Reconsideration and allowance of claims 1 and 12-13 are respectfully requested for at least these reasons.

Conclusion

Therefore, for at least these reasons, all claims are believed to be distinguishable over the combination of the 780 publication and the 618 publication, individually or in any combination. It has been shown above that the cited references, individually or in combination, may not be relied upon to show at least these features. Therefore, claims 1 and 12-13 are distinguishable over the cited references.

In view of the above amendments, it is believed that the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully request that the pending application be allowed.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Aslan Ettehadih Reg. No. 62,278 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

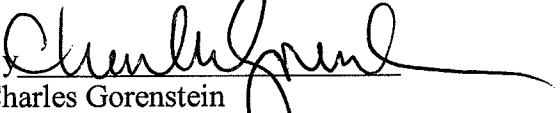
Application No. 10/551,581
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Docket No.: 4492-0135PUS1

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.147; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: September 25, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

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